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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the ramifications and limitations of communication theory and decision theory in analyses of the developmental process. To date, change theory has been of only limited use as a basis for analyses of process in specific developmental efforts and for comparative studies among projects. It is possible that a more adequate basis for analyses of process requires a concommitant concern for theories of communication and decision-making. Concern with decision-making has often focused on who makes decisions and the status of the decision-makers. Such studies have generally assumed recognized decision points and deliberate decision-making rather than decision by default or nondeliberate decision-making, that is, the failure to identify decision points and to recognize the delimiting nature of those decisions being made. An examination of the nondecisions may be more fruitful than of the decisions and decision process. The author considers the interface of decision-making, nondecision-making, and communication, and their interface with change theories, with particular emphasis on their relevance to the developmental process in two naturalistic urban settings. Desired outcomes include the clarification of possible new ways of looking at the developmental process and the stimulation of research on such areas. (Author/RWP)

NONDECISION-MAKING AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS

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Introduction

This paper will attempt to explore relationships between developmental process and nondecision-making. After briefly defining both of these concepts, the writer will present five hypothehetical models to illustrate possible relationships between developmental process and nondecision-making. Proceeding from definition to illustration, the writer will then begin to explore, posing questions for speculation and research. No conclusions will be reached. Perhaps, instead, suggestions leading to testable hypotheses about one aspect of man's behavior in groups will be generated.

Developmental Process

Developmental process is a concept with different connotations for different readers. In this paper, however, its connotation is straightforward. A group either creates or adapts some experimental materials. These materials are, in turn, field tested and evaluative data are collected. On the basis of the data, the original materials are revised. Finally, the revised materials are distributed (Grobman, 1970). Thus, the basic ingredients are two, a group and some materials; the basic activities are five, creation or adaptation, field testing, evaluation, revision, and distribution.

This particular perception of developmental process has been examined from many points of view. For example, some researchers have chosen to focus on the group involved, asking questions about its size, its climate, or its motives. Others have focused on the materials produced, concentrating on their content, their volume, or their intended audience. Still other researchers have focused on one or more of the activities involved, analyzing their validity, their cost, or their effectiveness. In other words, there are a great many ways to deal with developmental process, ways which focus on ingredients, activities, or some combination of the two (Corcoran, 1972).

Underlying many analyses of developmental process are some rather positive assumptions about the nature of man. Concerning communication patterns within the group, for example, it is often assumed that they are open, democratic, trusting, clear, and caring. Or, concerning the behavior of members within and outside the group, it is often assumed that men are rational, venturesome, goal-oriented, cooperative, and competent. While these kinds of characteristics may be quite appropriate as goals for an effective developmental process, this writer questions whether assumptions and observable behavior can become one and the same through advocacy.

In addition to the possible confusion between assumptions and observable behavior within developmental process, there is a tendency to focus on what is, or ought to be, rather than on what is not, or ought not to be. For example, with regard to membership in the group involved in developmental process, much time is spent describing and categorizing who is included and what constituencies are represented. Relatively little time is spent speculating on who has been excluded and what constituencies are not represented. Or, on a somewhat more elusive plane, lengthy descriptions of decisions that were reached are readily available; descriptions of decisions that were not reached are less readily available, particularly in this the era of telephoned, flown-in-from-great-distances-face-to-face, or shredded communication.

Thus, although this writer's concept of developmental process is fairly simple and straightforward, thorough and objective analyses of the process are not yet available in large quantity. This state of affairs can be rationalized in many ways, but three possible factors are of most interest to the present writer. First, developmental process is a saleable product in its own right, and hence it may be frequently described, analyzed, or touted by an advocate. Secondly and quite possibly related, the concept of developmental process may often be predicated on a romantic set of assumptions

about the nature of man and his behavior in groups. Third, as is generally the case in research dealing with relatively new concepts, there is a tendency to dwell on the qualities, problems, and dynamics that are known or present rather than to speculate about what is unknown or absent.

The purpose of this short paper is to begin to speculate about a small part of what is unknown or absent within developmental process. Let us proceed to examine a still hypothetical concept, nondecision-making, first as a definition, and then within a series of five illustrative models.

Nondecision-Making and Developmental Process

Within the context of developmental process, decision-making implies that the group involved functions in a rational, considered, and conscious fashion, choosing deliberately from among alternatives. Nondecision-making, on the other hand, implies that the group involved does not function in this fashion. This may indicate that there is an absence of rational, considered, and conscious behavior, or this may indicate that the opposite of rational, considered, and conscious behavior is occurring. But in either case, nondecision-making within the context of developmental process may open up the possibility of unacceptable, impractical, or undesirable behaviors or products.

Nondecision-making differs from a decision not to do something. A decision not to do something is, in its own right, a decision. Any decision, whether it is a decision to or a decision not to, carries with it some assumptions about intent. In a decision not to, the group fully intends, insofar as it is possible for it to know and to control what happens to it within a specifiable time and space frame, to avoid selected behaviors or products. Hence a conscious decision has been made; assumptions about what will happen within a delimited future and area have been made and are intended to be acted upon.

Nondecision-making also differs from postponing a decision, at least initially. To postpone making a decision at the foundation-laying phase of the decision-making process is its own form of decision, usually accompanied by some sort of intended deadline, either implicit or explicit, by which the postponed decision will have been made. If the group delays too long, however, and the time by which requisite phases ought to have been acted upon passes, then the decision becomes nondecision-making behavior retroactively or by default. The initial decision to postpone, however, was a decision. It is essentially the group's inability to meet its own deadlines that renders the postponement nondecision-making, not the postponement itself.

The processes, reasons, motives, or causes behind nondecision-making behaviors may not be precisely known or controllable at the point they are developing and increasing in influence on the originally planned outcomes. Yet it may be possible to identify a specific point within the developmental process when the unknown or uncontrollable factors become strong enough in influence or great enough in number to inhibit fulfillment of the objectives. The specific point may be a moment on a linear time line, the point when nondecision-making behaviors have been going on for so long that acceptable, practical, or desirable outcomes become impossible. Or, this specific point may be a keystone in a spatial arrangement of variables, the point where, when too many nondecision-making behaviors exist, the whole structure of the developmental process collapses.

In either case, it may be possible to analyze retrospectively how or why the developmental process was unsuccessful. Perhaps failure occurs at the point when the influence of nondecision-making behaviors outweighs that of decision-making behaviors, when those involved have become passive reactors rather than active controllers. This suggests that man may not always be able to know or control factors affecting his behaviors, or his products.

Depending on the context, the relative degrees of influence of a given factor or combination of factors may vary, as may the number of factors having influence at any one time. Thus, generalization from one context to the next may prove difficult.

It is possible that further research will provide discrete subclasses of nondecisions. Perhaps one way of grouping might be to culster known causal factors into a subclass. For example, inattention to detail may prove to be a behavior which, under specifiable circumstances, forces those involved in developmental process into a reacting rather than an initiating posture. Or, inattention to detail may cause necessary communication linkages to break; it may fail to provide essential resources. These kinds of contingencies may result in nondecision-making behaviors within the context of developmental process: behaviors leading to the development of unacceptable, impractical, or undesirable processes or products.

Another possible subclass of nondecision might be clustered around responses of significant others, individuals who are not directly involved in the developmental process but who are affected by it. For example, individuals in a position of authority superior to that of the individuals involved in the developmental process might find the behaviors or products of the developmental process unacceptable, impractical, or undesirable. Or, those whose support is necessary for the product of the developmental process to succeed might refuse to give support. In either case, nonsupport or rejection by significant others may place the decision-making behaviors or products in a new context, a context where they appear irrational and ill-considered. Thus, for the purposes of this paper, nondecision-making within the context of developmental process is seen as leading to unacceptable, impractical, or undesirable processes or products. It may be that further research will identify discrete subclasses of nondecision-making

behaviors. These subclasses may be grouped around specific factors such as inattention to detail or responses of significant others. Other subclasses may be grouped around the quantitative measurement of relative degrees of influence of selected factors within the developmental process. Still other subclasses may be grouped around broader concepts, such as time or space. Since this paper is exploratory, the possible subclasses suggested are put forth as tentative ideas. To explore these ideas more fully, let us proceed to consider them within the context of illustrative models.

Illustrative Models

There are many dangers in using hypothetical models as illustrations. Some readers refuse to believe that the models are really hypothetical. In the present paper each model is hypothetical, although the writer has read of, heard of, and observed a piece here and a piece there. Another danger in using hypothetical models is that the illustration obscures the points that the writer is attempting to make. Still a third danger is that the hypothetical nature of the ideas being explored is lost, and the models serve to reify what is still formative thinking. Despite these dangers, the writer has chosen to use hypothetical models as illustrative case studies, believing that this technique will enhance rather than inhibit clearer communication.

The big picture model. For this model, imagine that a group of five to seven individuals are engaged in developing a curriculum. Further imagine that this is an undergraduate curriculum in remedial skills for students admitted under an open enrollment policy to a medium-sized public college or university. Two or three members of the group may be faculty with expertise in related areas. The rest may be practitioners or consultants especially hired for the purpose. The group has been assembled by administrative fiat,

and has been given a free hand to do the best it can within a limited budget. The majority of the group is eager to succeed with the assignment to win recognition and approval from the administration.

The developmental process of this hypothetical group is still in its early stages. The members have not yet decided whether to invent new materials or to adapt materials developed by other, similar, institutions. Nor have they reached any agreement about precisely which types of remedial skills to emphasize. The debate see-saws back and forth within the group. One faction argues that the group ought to think big, and, for the moment at least, shoot for the moon. Another faction argues that thinking that big is unrealistic, a waste of time. The chairman plays a neutral, nondirective role, permitting both sides of the argument to ebb and flow.

As time passes, it becomes obvious that little progress is being made, and adversary roles begin to develop. The big thinkers perceive of the realists as short-sighted obstructionists. The realists perceive of the big thinkers as naive and irresponsible dreamers. Gradually the discussion focuses on the differences between the world views of the factions, rather than on the developmental process. Bit by bit the realists give ground. They tire of playing such a negative role. An ambitious plan for broad-based remediation gradually emerges. It is not field tested because the administration views it as impractical and prohibitively expensive.

To summarize, a group of five to seven individuals was to have developed a curriculum in remedial skills within a limited budget. What seems to have happened instead is that the group became entangled in a debate over the relative size of the proposed curriculum. The importance of the debate seems to have overshadowed that of the curriculum, at least for some of the individuals involved. The curriculum or product developed was shelved by the administration. Perhaps, in time it will be as if the group never met, or the curriculum were never developed.

From the information provided, it appears that the individuals involved did not consciously decide to engage in irrational or nonproductive behaviors. Nor do they seem to have decided to develop an impractical or undesirable product. Instead, they seem to have failed to see the possible consequences of prolonged disagreement about the relative scope of their project. The content and theory behind the differing points of view seem to have gained so much influence that other factors, such as timing and budget, were diminished to well below their real level of influence. Yet no decision was consciously made to inflate the influence of some factors, and to deflate the influence of others.

To make the problem even more complex, it also seems as if no one in the group were aware of the distortion of influential factors; the group submitted a plan which was apparently out of step with the needs of the university or college. Again, no decision to misinterpret seems to have been consciously made. If one analyzes the episode by looking at decisions consciously made, it appears as if the phrase "due to circumstances beyond our control" might be the most appropriate explanation of what prevented an effective developmental process.

Viewed from within the conceptual framework of nondecision-making, however, a different explanation of the same set of circumstances is possible. Within this episode, nondecision-making behaviors about priorities, degrees of influence for different factors, timelines, conflicts, and leadership seem to have occurred. Although one can never know in an absolute sense, it is probable that, had conscious decisions been made concerning these variables, a viable product might have been developed and implemented. Perhaps if a member had served as a commentator on nondecisions, variables which the group seemed to be ignoring might have been considered, thereby increasing the chances of an effective developmental process. Rather than

speculating about this first example further at this point, let us proceed with another example where the developmental process was even less effective.

The next week is soon enough model. Although this second model may resemble the big picture model, there are some important differences. In order to underscore the differences between the two, imagine a totally dissimilar scenario. For this model, imagine that a group of three high school teachers has volunteered to develop new testing materials for the social sciences, grades nine through twelve. That they volunteered for the task was the direct result of a faculty meeting which had turned into a general gripe session about the form and substance of the department's final examinations. Somehow, during the process of that gripe session, the three most vocal critics had agreed, rather vaguely, to put time and thought into developing more meaningful finals for experimental use in a few classrooms.

The developmental process in this case can hardly be said to have begun. The group has been designated, granted, but it has not yet met or established procedures for communication, leadership, and other activities related to developmental process. The task has been loosely defined, granted, but no timelines or guidelines have been established to ensure its being fulfilled. When asked, all three volunteers indicate their intent to get together soon, possibly next week. Other members of the social science department, although concerned about the low quality of presently available testing materials, do not push any of the three volunteers very hard on the subject for fear that their services will be comandeered on the spot. The departmental chairman does not pursue the issue either, since testing is among the least of his worries at the moment.

As the school year approaches an end, the three volunteers realize that, to save face, they ought to at least go through the motions of having

tried to come up with something. They meet during lunch two or three times, getting as far as adding new criticisms of the testing materials proposed for the examination period which is coming up. At the final department meeting of the year, they report that they were unable to complete the task in time for this examination period, but that they have every hope of finishing in time for next year's midterms.

To summarize, three volunteers were to have developed a new set of testing materials. In the absence of firm guidelines and timelines, nothing much was done. Apparently, the volunteers found that they had more urgent matters to attend to. Yet, as the episode has been described, it appears as if the three volunteers fully intended, at least initially, to develop the materials. In other words, no conscious decision not to follow through appears to have been made.

This example illustrates a difference between postponing a decision and nondecision-making. Although the teachers did continually delay getting together, they did not implicitly or explicitly identify a deadline. Instead, they sidestepped the questions of timing and objectives, failing to come to any decisions. The teachers had not reached the point of identifying decisions clearly enough to be able to postpone them. One result of their sidestepping this kind of decision-making was to prevent an effective developmental process from getting started. If decisions about timing and objectives had been made, then perhaps the developmental process might have gotten off to a stronger start.

Looking at this example from another angle, there appear to be some possible nondecision-making behaviors about support and accountability as well. The three volunteers received virtually no backing or help from either their peers or their supervisor, yet there is no evidence to suggest that peers or supervisor consciously decided to undermine the developmental

process. On the other hand, the three volunteers did not appear to be directly accountable to anyone for anything, yet there is no evidence to suggest that they consciously decided not to develop testing materials.

Perhaps the kinds of nondecision-making behaviors which may have been operating with respect to support and accountability are endemic to volunteerism. It may well be that, implicit in some processes which rely heavily on volunteer help or "found" resources, there is a holding back on commitment, either by the volunteer or by the recipient of the volunteerism. If so, then perhaps this possiblity hides many nondecision-making behaviors in need of exploration. Moving on to another example, let us look at a group combining some volunteers and a paid-in-released-time leader.

The I can't cope with paperwork model. For this third model, imagine still another kind of scenario. Let us imagine a group of twelve to fifteen individuals who are charged with developing an experimental policy manual to monitor the hiring and firing practices of one campus of a multiuniversity. The members of the group represent a cross section of administrators, faculty, support staff, and service personnel. An extremely sincere and dedicated individual is named leader of the group. Although he has no previous experience in this type of leadership position, it is hoped that his intelligence and enthusiasm about the importance of the task to be undertaken will carry him through.

During the first few meetings, it becomes known that the leader has been given about twice as much time to devote to the policy manual as any of the other members of teh group. Thus, the relationships between the leader and the group undergo a subtle shift, and the group begins to develop different expectations about its role and the leader's role. The leader, whom the group members originally viewed as first among equals, is now viewed as responsible for taking care of virtually all administrative details con-

nected with the development of the policy manual. Because of the nature of the task, dealing with related administrative tasks necessitates working closely with a large number of different divisions and subdivisions of the university, government and community, both on campus and off.

It becomes apparent that the bureaucratic and administrative aspects of the assignment were not made sufficiently clear to the leader, either by the group or the administrator who appointed him to undertake the task. Thus, even though the leader works extremely hard and enthusiastically, he spends most of his time dealing with the human elements of hiring and firing policy development, talking and listening to individuals wanting to have their say about what the policy manual ought to include.

As a result of this confusion, deadline after deadline fails to be met, and the original policy-making group finds itself being asked to rubberstamp decisions which the leader has already made unilaterally, since he is the only member of the group receiving information about what is to happen when, where, and how. Gradually, members of the original group resign, frustrated by their inability to obtain enough information with enough lead time to make policies intelligently.

To sum up, a group is formed to develop a policy manual, the leader of which is given released time to coordinate administrative details. The leader, rather than attending to the paperwork aspects of the developmental process, focuses on the human relations aspect of the task. This appears to result in a severe dislocation of authority, in that the leader fails to provide his group with enough information and enough time to make considered judgments.

Looking over this episode, there does not appear to be any evidence to suggest intentional blocking of the developmental process. It seems probable, however, that certain key factors were not dealt with within the

decision-making process: factors such as the effects of inequity of work loads, mixed and conflicting expectations about roles and responsibilities, or the effects of weak management skills, particularly with respect to timing. Perhaps it was because these kinds of process factors were not directly confronted that the entire development process was "lost."

Even though there are no readily identifiable culprits in the episode, it seems quite possible that, had a few more conscious decisions been made, the development of the policy manual might have fared a bit better. For example, if the group, its leader, and possibly the appointing administrator had sat down together and attempted to clarify roles, responsibilites, and expectations, then perhaps the leadership behaviors would have been more effective. Or, if the group had specified its needs with respect to timing, receipt of information, and decision-making, perhaps it would not have become disenfranchised. Again, perhaps a commentator to identify areas of nondecision-making might have remedied at least some of the difficulties. In an attempt to clarify nondecision-making further, let us continue on with a new example, trying to look at the problems in still another light.

The you don't trust me model. For the fourth model imagine a group of eight to ten faculty, each representing a different department or division within a college or school. Although the group has just come together for the first time, its members know full well that the task they have ahead of them is going to be arduous and thankless; they have been asked to develop materials in preparation for the visit of the national accrediting agency within their disciplines. The visit is scheduled for the following year. The chairman of the group is its senior member, both in terms of rank and years of experience at that institution. None of the group has been given released time to work on the task, although several members do have lighter teaching assignments due to the administrative nature of their other duties.

In preparation for the first meeting, the chairman has located and distributed copies of all documents in the college's or school's files which pertain to previous visits by accrediting teams. He has also distributed the guidelines from which the accrediting team will be working. These guidelines are new to the institution in that, at the time of the previous accreditation visit, the old guidelines were still in force, guidelines which were much more loosely structured than the new ones appear to be, particularly with respect to performance and accountability. As the agenda for the first meeting, the chairman has suggested that each faculty representative come prepared to discuss his department's or division's goals and objectives.

Shortly after the first meeting is underway, it becomes clear that the discussion of goals and objectives has become muddled. Some faculty have obviously prepared for the meeting, and their discussions are relatively coherent, although what they are discussing as goals and objectives would be difficult to measure according to the accreditation standards. Other faculty seem to have prepared less well for the meeting, and their discussions of goals and objectives do not seem to be coherent from the perceptions expressed by their listeners.

Quite quickly the level of tension escalates, and in one or two instances the cross-questioning becomes quite unprofessional and acrimonious. Questions are no longer perceived as questions; they are perceived as criticisms, and the debate begins to focus on whether individuals from one discipline have the right to question goals, objectives, or indeed anything from another discipline. As the meeting ends at the scheduled hour, one member of the group is heard to mutter something about the necessity for all members to have faith in one another's competence and good intentions.

To summarize, this group is in the very early stages of putting together a report for its discipline's national accrediting agency. The group members, each of whom represents an area of study within the discipline, demonstrate varying levels of competence in presenting analyses of goals and objectives for their respective areas of study. Clarifying questions are interpreted as criticisms, and the ability of the group to work together productively becomes questionable. From the evidence provided, it does not seem as if any group members have consciously decided to undercut representatives of other areas of study. But on the other hand, nondecision-making about factors such as group process, cooperation, or the effects of differences in interest and area of expertise seems to be operating.

Within the framework of nondecision-making, several hypothetical interpretations are possible. For example, no decisions about dealing with different areas of study seem to have been made. No decisions about working with different competencies seem to have been made. To generalize, no decisions about the overall working style of a group with diverse and possibly competing interests seem to have been made. It is possible that this avoidance of an initially problematic set of factors may force group members into positions from which they cannot escape, positions where there are winners and losers. Or, it is possible that the group may give up any pretense of trying to work together. Each member may write his report in splendid isolation, not looking at contexts any broader than his one sphere of competence. In either case, it seems as if nondecision-making related to factors such as diversity and competing interests may affect the developmental process.

Acknowledging the possibility that nondecision-making is operating is not the same as solving the problems that nondecision-making may be causing. Once areas of nondecision-making are identified, then perhaps the individuals involved in the developmental process may choose to make decisions in

these areas. For example, in this episode, if nondecision-making behaviors about diversity had been identified as operating, then perhaps the group and/or its leader might have chosen to make some decisions about working with diverse interests and competencies. Making decisions about working with diversity would not guarantee solving problems stemming from diversity, but it might increase the chances of an effective developmental process. Let us move on now to the final model, examining nondecision-making in still another light.

The it is written model. For the fifth and final model, let us imagine a scenario completely unrelated to the educational sphere. This is to suggest that none of the illustrations of developmental process is limited to educational groups. Imagine a group of five to seven representatives elected from the early shift of a small manufacturing plant. Further imagine that this plant is in serious trouble, that it has a growing reputation for producing defective products. The designated leader of this early shift group is either a shop steward or foreman, its other members are workers elected by each of the assembly lines on the early shift. The task at hand is to figure out a system for cutting down on the percentage of defective products. If successful, the system may be implemented throughout the plant, on all lines and shifts.

As the group comes together for the first time, there seems to be extreme discomfort and awkwardness as shown by the nonverbal behavior of each of the members. On the other hand, the group is aware of the consequences of continuing to turn out such a high percentage of defective products. On the other hand, the group appears to be quite unwilling to discuss possible causes for this state of affairs. An impasse seems to have been reached, with each member waiting for the next to go first.

All at once the youngest member of the group begins to speak about fairness, production rates, salary incentives, working conditions, and fear of job loss. Although it takes a long time for the rest of the group to be able to sort things out, the ice has been broken, and the first step of the developmental process may be said to have begun.

According to the group, a written law is to blame for the increasing number of defective products coming off the line. The law states that it is illegal to use a particular time-saving device in the manufacture of the plant's product. Apparently, when the time-saving device was originally invented, its use almost always resulted in a defective product: hence the written law. Since that time, however, improvements have been made on the time-saving device so that now, use of its most recently improved version rarely results in a defective product.

The workers in this particular plant, attempting to increase productivity, make frequent use of older, less improved, versions of the device. The workers are not investing in the most recent version because it seems like too much money to pay for the risk of being fired. With use of the older version, the risk is there, granted, but it costs much less. After all the law is on the books.

To sum up this final example, a group is assigned the task of trying to decrease the proportion of defective products coming off its assembly line. After some preliminary discussion, it turns out that underlying the problem of defective products is a problem of antiquated labor and union laws. Within the framework of nondecision-making, it appears that the workers have not yet reached a workable and conscious decision about how to update the law. Up until the point where the episode began, the workers had consciously decided to subvert the law. This decision was no longer viable, however, since it was leading to defective products and a threat to job security.

For this example there seems to be a series of branching hypothetical outcomes possible. One outcome might be that the group continues to avoid the risks of attempting to update the law. This might be a conscious decision, or it might be a nondecision, depending on the context and the timing of the group's deliberations. Another outcome might be that the group consciously decides to risk updating the law. Once having made that decision, the group might then either slide into a nondecision-making stance about what happens next, or it might continue to focus on areas about which decisions ought to be made, thereby making a concerted effort to monitor areas which had been ignored or avoided until the present. Whatever the hypothetical outcome selected, it seems probable that the smaller the area of nondecision-making, the greater the chances of the group's being able to act as initiator rather than reactor. Or, stated conversely, the larger the area of nondecision-making, the less control the group may have over the developmental process.

Thus, out of this fifth example, the possible ripple effects of nondecision-making begin to emerge, where a nondecision at one point may influence the probable range of outcomes at other points. Without careful scrutiny of nondecisions, it may be difficult to perceive linkages between these seemingly unconnected points. This fifth example also begins to suggest the possibility of mathematical relationships between relative degrees of influence of decisions and nondecisions. In an attempt to tease clearer and more meaningful hypotheses out of all five models, let us move forward to the concluding section of this paper, where interrelationships among the models are explored within the overall conceptual framework of nondecision-making.

Conclusions

One set of interrelationships revolves around four assumptions which are common to all five illustrations. In brief, these assumptions are: (a) that nondecision-making behaviors may inhibit successful developmental process; (b) that groups involved in developmental process may prefer success to failure; (c) that data about nondecision-making behaviors may be collected and arranged in discrete subclasses; (d) that intelligent use of these data may permit a decrease in the influences of nondecision-making behaviors on developmental process.

Thus a logical next step in the exploratory process might be to restate each of these four assumptions about nondecision-making behaviors within the developmental process, stating them so that they become testable hypotheses. It is possible that each assumption might generate many hypotheses to be tested, refined, restated and proven or disproven by empirical research. As this kind of research goes well beyond the purview of the present paper, no attempt to proceed along these lines will be made.

Another set of interrelationships among the models revolves around three hypothetical patterns or ratios which seem to have emerged: (a) the greater the influence of nondecision-making behaviors, the smaller the possibility of successful developmental process; (b) the greater the awareness of nondecision-making behaviors, the greater the possibility of successful developmental process; (c) the clearer the context for developmental process, the smaller the possibility of nondecision-making behaviors.

Again, as was true of the four assumptions, each of these ratios is unproven thus far. It is possible that empirical research might not only prove or disprove the validity of these and similar ratios; it might also specify precise mathematical formulae to describe relative weights of

influence for factors, or subclasses of factors, of nondecision-making behaviors within the developmental process. If this were possible, then it might also be possible to specify laws or principles governing aspects of man's behavior in groups. It is the writer's hope that these and similar speculations will merit further research.

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